

Testimony of Joe Miano, President of the Towing and
Recovery Professionals of Connecticut

Raised Bill 5459 An Act Concerning Wreckers

Good afternoon Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrera and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Joe Miano, President of the Towing and Recovery Professionals of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on Raised Bill 5459, An Act Concerning Wreckers.

Section 1(a) of this bill requires that all tow trucks have wrecker plates. Currently only companies who tow for compensation need wrecker plates. Reality is that there are a number of "gypsy" towers who put a commercial plate on their truck, operate out of their garage and tow for compensation. They do not carry the proper insurance, do not pay full property taxes and do not undergo the safety checks that are required of professional tow truck operators. Passage of this section would raise revenues for municipalities, improve tow truck safety and level the playing field for the vast majority of us who obey Connecticut state law.

Section 1(b) limits the lighting requirements at a job to the actual work area. Currently we are required to have lights that shine in all directions which can present a hazard to oncoming traffic. We have spoken to the state police who are supportive of our position.

Section 1(h) allows a towing company to charge not more than \$50 for towing an inoperable motor vehicle off of our property. I want to stress that this charge is only for cars that cannot be driven off our lots. We do not have a problem driving cars from our lots to the street for pickup. However, insurance regulations prohibit us from allowing another tow truck onto our property. The garage owner, after a nonconsensual tow, has to call his driver back in from the road or take an employee off another job, have him hook up to the disabled car and tow it to the street. Current law does not allow us to charge for the significant labor required to move a disabled vehicle.

Finally, Section 2(b) allows us to place a lien on abandoned pocket bikes, ATVs and similar types of motorized personal property if it has been removed from private property and stored at one of our facilities for more than thirty days. The lien is for the cost of towing and storage. Currently we can only place a lien on motorized personal property that we remove at the direction of a police officer.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak to you today. I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.